EMERGENCE OF PUNJAB AS A MEDICAL TOURISM DESTINATION: A STUDY OF OVERSEAS PATIENTS

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ABSTRACT
Health and medical tourism is perceived as one of the fastest growing segments in marketing “Destination India” today. Medical tourism is becoming an increasingly popular option for patients looking to access procedures that are seemingly unavailable to them in their home countries due to high expenditure, lack of availability, and/or lengthy waiting lists. In its broadest concept, medical tourism refers to “travel with the express purpose of obtaining health services abroad” (Ramirez de Arellano, 2007).

However, studies reflecting reasons to choose India and especially Punjab as a medical tourism destination are lacking in the available literature. Punjab is a choice for medical treatments for most of the NRI’s from different parts of the World, as they can visit the sacred Golden temple and get their medical treatment done at the same destination.

Top hospitals are investing immense time, effort, manpower and money in their R&D. A well-structured questionnaire is used to seek information from overseas patients in hospitals of 4 major cities of Punjab.

The paper concludes with some suggestions for facing the challenges faced by medical tourism so that full potential of this sector can be realized for prosperity of the state.

KEYWORDS: Health services, Medical tourism, Overseas patients, Punjab.